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What Is Bring Back The Natives?

Bring Back The Natives is a new, national effort by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to restore the health of entire riverine systems and their native species. National, State, and local partners and volunteers are matching our commitment to **Bring Back The Natives!** Together, we are undertaking the following vital public land management initiatives that target key habitats and animal and plant species, as well as water quality.

Fish and Wildlife 2000—A plan to improve management of fish, wildlife, and their habitats on BLM's public lands between now and the year 2000.

Riparian-Wetland Initiative for the 1990's—BLM's initiative to restore 75 percent of riparian and wetland habitats on public lands by 1997.

Rise to the Future—A program to enhance fisheries and aquatic resources on national forests and grasslands.

Every Species Counts—The Forest Service program to conserve sensitive flora and fauna and to recover threatened and endangered fish, wildlife, invertebrates, and plants.

Get Wild!—A Forest Service program that includes protection and improvement of riparian and wetland habitats, and conservation of the associated animals and plants.

Why We Need To Bring Back The Natives

The health of our Nation's aquatic habitats seems to be declining at an alarming rate. The 1982 Nationwide Rivers Inventory found that fewer than 2 percent of our streams in the contiguous 48 States remained at "high natural quality." Many of our native fish and aquatic species such as mussels, snails, and aquatic insects are sensitive indicators of water quality and have declined as aquatic habitats have deteriorated. At least 40 species and subspecies of freshwater fish have become extinct because of habitat alteration, introduction of exotic species, pollution, or overfishing. During the past decade, there has been a 45-percent increase in the number of freshwater North American

fishes at risk of extinction. For many of these aquatic species, public lands are the last remaining stronghold of suitable habitats. This awareness must lead to constructive actions to restore these vital aquatic ecosystems.



Volunteer day

For some streams, restoration is complex and time-consuming. For others, nature needs only a little help—such as planting trees and modifying grazing or logging practices—to restore degraded quality. However, success can only come from an effective team effort by Federal and State agencies and the private sector. It takes concerted effort, commitment, and the support of partners to get the job done and **Bring Back The Natives!**



Greenback cutthroat trout

Habitat restoration is one of the keys to successful reestablishment of native species. Successful restoration improves water quality and stream health. Once streams begin to recover, native species can be reintroduced.

GLENN TITUS

Status of Aquatic Resources on Public Lands

Restoration is needed for many aquatic habitats and native fish communities. Historic impacts from improper mining techniques and livestock management, poor timber practices, and faulty road construction have degraded many habitats that are critical for conservation of biodiversity and water quality. Waters on public lands offer tremendous opportunities to improve degraded sites, recover threatened and endangered species, and conserve other rare aquatic species. The BLM and the Forest Service are committed to making the most of these opportunities, including efforts to enhance the experiences of public land visitors.



Desert pupfish

The more than 461 million acres of multiple-use lands managed by the BLM and Forest Service contain many threatened or endangered aquatic species, plus dozens more that are candidates for threatened or endangered status. BLM and the National Forest System lands harbor almost 69 percent of the threatened and endangered fish species in the United States and more than one-half of those fish that are candidates for Federal listing. Conservation efforts on public lands can make a critical difference to the survival of these vulnerable species.

Number of rare fishes and other aquatic animals on public lands as compared to the national total

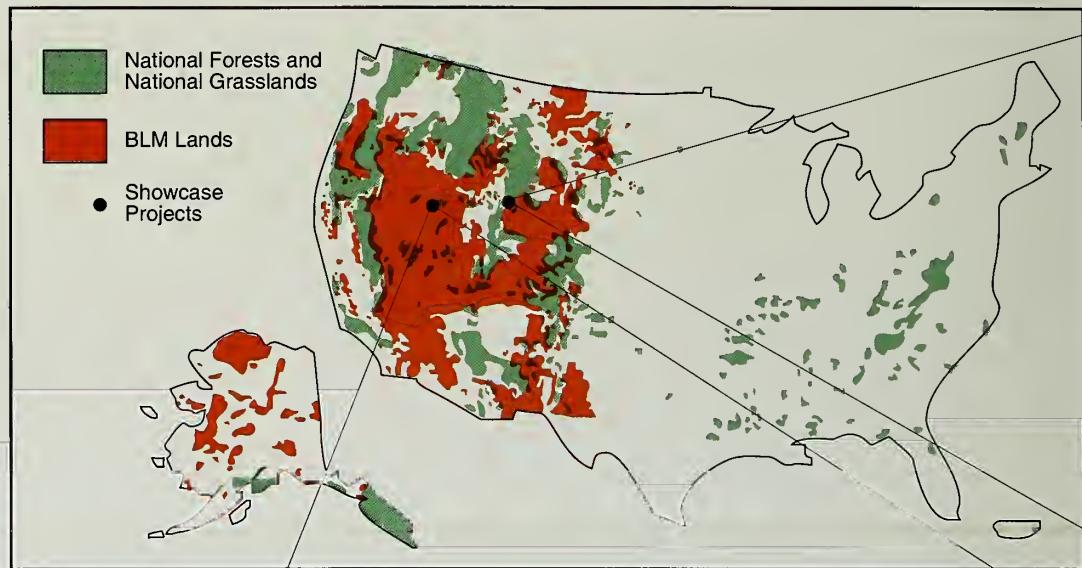
	National Forest System	BLM	NFS or BLM lands ^a	National total
Threatened or endangered fish species	40	40	59	87
Candidate fish species	48	40	69	113
Threatened or endangered aquatic invertebrates ^b	26	3 ^c	27	56

^aNumber of rare species found on either National Forest System or BLM lands or both.

^bAquatic invertebrates include snails, mussels, crustaceans, and insects.

^cMost BLM lands have not been surveyed for aquatic animals other than fish.

Ongoing Restoration Projects



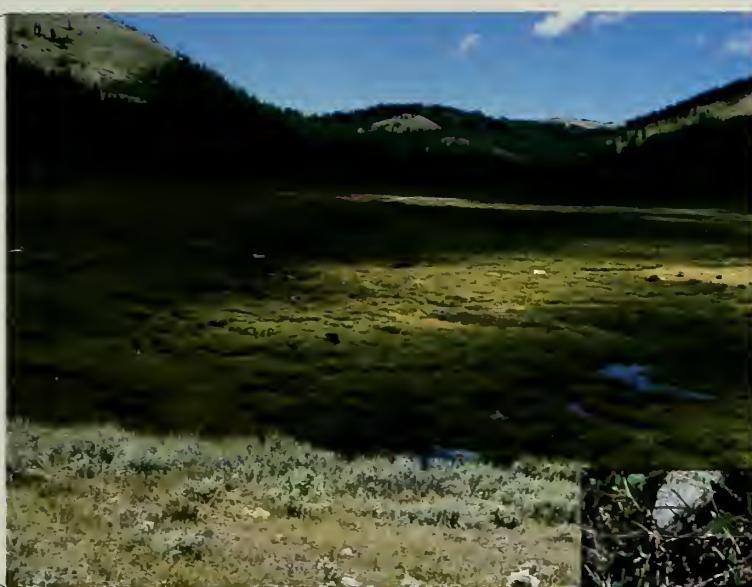
Past land use in the Marys River watershed has resulted in poor water quality, eroding banks, and reduced fish populations.



Restoration of 116 miles of stream habitat within the Marys River watershed will provide the foundation for recovery of the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout in northeastern Nevada.



Dense riparian vegetation resulting from improved land use management and habitat restoration filters sediments, improves flows, and maintains water temperatures... all leading to healthier fish populations.



KURT NELSON

Historically, LaBarge Creek was home to the Colorado cutthroat trout. Restoration of LaBarge Creek and several other streams within the watershed will provide renewed angling opportunities in southwestern Wyoming.



DAN DUFFIELD

The health of LaBarge Creek, like all streams, reflects land use practices within its watershed. Improvements to fishes and other aquatic species found within the watershed are founded in sound range and timber resources management.



USDA FOREST SERVICE

Other species, such as elk, heron, and bald eagles, also benefit from improved riparian conditions.

Who Benefits From Bring Back The Natives?

Endangered & Threatened Species

Habitat restoration, species reintroduction, and sound land management will aid the recovery of vulnerable species.

Other Sensitive Species

Conservation of entire aquatic communities will provide protection to the growing number of candidate and sensitive species that might otherwise decline further and require formal protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Recreational Anglers

Restoration and careful management of habitat for native gamefish species, such as Bonneville cutthroat trout and bull trout, will expand and diversify quality recreational fishing opportunities.

All Those Who Live Downstream

Healthy riparian vegetation along streams purifies waters by trapping silt and other pollutants, slows river flow to increase groundwater recharge, dissipates flood energy, and cools water by shading. The results are better water quality and more consistent flows.

Others

Quality riparian and wetland habitats provide the wildland setting sought by many public land visitors wishing to simply relax and experience nature.



THOMAS TAYLOR

Together, the BLM and the Forest Service manage more than 461 million acres, or 70 percent of all Federal lands in the United States. Waters on these public lands offer tremendous opportunities to recover threatened and endangered or otherwise rare aquatic species. These aquatic habitats include 283,000 miles of streams, nearly 6.5 million acres of lakes and reservoirs, and thousands of springs. These areas also provide unparalleled water-related recreation and educational opportunities to millions of public land visitors each year.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization established by the U.S. Congress to encourage and administer private contributions for the benefit of our Nation's fish, wildlife, and plant resources.

To find out how you can help *Bring Back the Natives*, write to the USDA Forest Service, Wildlife, Fish and Rare Plants, 14th & Independence, SW, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090-6090; Bureau of Land Management, Division of Wildlife and Fisheries, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240; or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036.

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BRING BACK THE NATIVES

*Restoring the Pieces of
Our National Heritage*